

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for consideration given the present application. Claims 1-8 are currently pending. Claims 1 is independent. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejected claims in light of the amendment and remarks presented herein, and earnestly seeks timely allowance of all pending claims.

The Claims Define Patentable Subject Matter

The Office Action rejects claims 1-8 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over either of U.S. Pat. Pub. No. 2006/0169686 to Andoh et al. (Andoh I) or U.S. Pat. Pub. No. 2006/0191892 to Andoh et al. (Andoh II). This rejection is rendered moot.

The pending claims are supported by Japanese Pat. Appl. No. 2004-078814 filed March 18, 2004, which is earlier than the July 23, 2004 filing date of Andoh I and the July 26, 2004 filing date of Andoh II. A certified English language translation of the priority document is provided to claim priority of the Japanese Patent Application. Thus, Andoh I and Andoh II are not prior art for this application.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of the claims is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

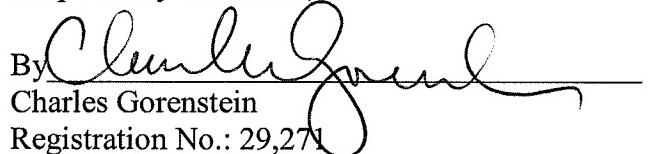
In view of the above Amendment, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Obert H. Chu, Reg. No. 52,744 at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

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